



**Testimony**  
**Elizabeth Gara**  
**Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)**  
**Before the**  
**Planning & Development Committee**  
**February 14, 2011**

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA) recommends that **5049 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OR DESTRUCTION OF TREES** be amended to ensure that water companies that own and maintain lands within municipal boundaries are permitted to remove trees which may be essential as part of a responsible forestry management plan to protect the purity and quality of our public water supplies.

The bill would allow towns to implement ordinances regarding the removal or destruction of trees. These ordinances may interfere with the ability of water companies to engage in timber harvesting.

Maintaining a healthy and diverse forest on a sustainable basis is beneficial to water quality and water production, according to the Northeast Association of Forest Watershed Managers. Cutting certain trees is actually a means of ensuring the health and diversity of a forest because some trees may be diseased or, as a forest becomes older, trees need to be harvested to promote regeneration. In addition, utilities may have to remove trees that pose risks to water quality and water production as well as utility operations or hiking trails and bike paths.

We therefore urge that the bill be amended to exempt watershed lands within municipal boundaries. .

*The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of public water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut. Membership in the Association is open to all Connecticut water utilities: investor-owned, municipal and regional authorities. CWWA is committed to working with the state to develop policies that will ensure that Connecticut has a safe, ample supply of water to meet present and future needs.*